

Appl. No. : 10/791,111
Filed : March 2, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as set forth in the following listing of claims, which replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel, the front and rear wheels supporting the frame, a seat disposed on the frame, an internal combustion engine being mounted to the frame, the engine comprising a crankshaft and an air intake system, a transmission comprising an output shaft, the output shaft being connected to the crankshaft, the output shaft driving at least one of the front wheel and the rear wheel, the seat having ~~a front end and a rear end~~ first and second seat sections and front and rear ends, the first and second seat sections being spaced apart from each other, at least a portion of the intake system extending between the first and second seat sections, the crankshaft being positioned between the output shaft and the rear wheel, and at least the output shaft being disposed between a generally vertically extending first plane that extends through the front end of the seat and a generally vertically extending second plane that extends through the rear end of the seat.

2. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the engine extends rearward through the second plane.

3. (Currently Amended) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the engine comprises ~~an air intake system and~~ a front surface, and the intake system extends generally forward from the front surface of the engine.

4. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 3, wherein the engine comprises an exhaust system and a rear surface, and the exhaust system extends generally rearward from the rear surface of the engine.

5. (Currently Amended) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the engine comprises ~~an air intake system and~~ an exhaust system, and the air intake system and the exhaust system extend in opposite directions from the engine.

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6. (Currently Amended) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the seat has a top end and at least one of the crankshaft and the output shaft is positioned vertically lower than a generally horizontally extending third plane, the third plane being defined through that passes extends along the top end of the seat.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim ~~[[7]]~~ 1, wherein the intake system comprises a fuel supply device, and the fuel supply device is positioned between the first and second seat sections.

9. (Currently Amended) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1 additionally comprising a change speed mechanism arranged to operate the transmission, the change speed mechanism comprising a manually operable lever unit, ~~the seat including a first seat section and a second seat section that are laterally spaced apart from each other, and~~ the lever unit being disposed generally between the seat sections.

10. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 9, wherein the lever unit comprises a shift lever and a cover member and at least a portion of the cover member is positioned between the first and second seat sections.

11. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the engine and the transmission are directly connected with casings such that a unitarily construction results.

12. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the engine is positioned rearward of a back rest associated with the seat.

13. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a pair of front wheels and a pair of rear wheels support the frame.

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14. (Currently Amended) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel supporting the frame, an internal combustion engine being mounted to the frame, the engine comprising an air intake system and a crankshaft that drives at least one of the front wheel and the rear wheel, a seat mounted to the frame, the seat comprising a ~~front end and a rear end~~ first and second seat sections and front and rear ends, the first and second seat sections being spaced apart from each other, at least a portion of the intake system extending between the first and second seat sections, the crankshaft being positioned between a generally vertically extending first plane that extends along the front end of the seat and a generally vertically extending second plane that extends along the rear end of the seat, at least a portion of the engine also extending through the second plane.

15. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 14, wherein the seat has a bottom end upon which an occupant sits and the crankshaft is positioned vertically lower than a generally horizontally extending third plane that extends along the bottom end of the seat.

16. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 15, wherein at least a portion of the engine is positioned vertically higher than the third plane.

17. (Original) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 16, wherein the seat has a back and said engine extends at least partially rearward of the back.

18. (Currently Amended) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel supporting the frame, a seat disposed on the frame, an internal combustion engine mounted to the frame, the engine comprising a crankshaft and an air intake system, a transmission comprising an output shaft driven by the crankshaft, the output shaft being connected to at least one of the front wheel and the rear wheel, the seat having first and second seat sections, the first and second seat sections being spaced apart from each other, at least a portion of the intake system extending between the first and second seat sections, the seat also having a front end, a rear end and a bottom end, the crankshaft being positioned between the output shaft and the rear wheel, the output shaft being disposed between a generally vertically extending first plane extending along the front end of the seat and a generally vertically extending second plane extending along the rear end of the seat, at least a portion of the engine extending rearward through the second plane and at least a portion of the engine being vertically higher than a generally horizontally extending third plane that extends along the bottom end.

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19. (Currently Amended) An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel supporting the frame, a seat disposed on the frame, a prime mover mounted to the frame, the prime mover comprising a first shaft and an air intake system, a transmission comprising a second shaft, the second shaft being driven by the first shaft, the second shaft driving at least one of the front wheel and the rear wheel, the seat comprising ~~a front end and a rear end~~ first and second seat sections and front and rear ends, the first and second seat sections being spaced apart from each other, at least a portion of the intake system extending between the first and second seat sections, the first shaft being positioned between the second shaft and the rear wheel, and the second shaft being positioned between a generally vertically extending first plane that extends along the front end of the seat and a generally vertically extending second plane that extends along the rear end of the seat.

20. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the seat has at least one seat back being oriented generally vertically and upwardly with respect to the first and second seat sections.

21. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 20, wherein the seat back extends along a vertical plane intermediate the first and second seat sections.

22. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 20, wherein the seat has two seat backs, each seat back being oriented generally vertically and upwardly with respect to a respective one of the first and second seat sections.

23. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 22, wherein the seat section and the seat back are separate.

24. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 22, wherein the first and second seat sections comprise a seat cushion, and wherein each of the two seat backs is formed unitarily with a respective one of the seat cushions.

25. (New) The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein each of the first and second seat sections has at least one seat cushion.